

The Unity of Isaiah: Evidence from Chapters 36-39

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The four chapters of Isaiah 36-39 that appear also in II Kings 18-20 and that contain historical dialog between the prophet and his king, Hezekiah, have produced more critical debate than any other section of I and II Kings.¹ They furnish also some of our primary evidence for the unity of the Book of Isaiah,² forming, as Delitzsch has put it, a "bridge" to the prophecies that follow.³ A thorough treatment of this evidence hence becomes impossible under present limitations. The writer would seek, however, to indicate three specific areas within this larger discussion in which sharpened awareness may contribute to a defense of the total authority of Scripture.

L. CONDITIONING FACTORS IN EVANGELICALISM'S APPROACH TO ISAIAH 36-39

If we take, for example, such a question as the relation of Isaiah 36-39 to II Kings 18-20, it appears at the outset that liberal and conservative writers reach opposite conclusions because of their respective methodologies. The liberal, e.g. S.R. Driver, limits his admissible evidence to inductive comparisons of literary detail and of thematic concepts; he thus decides in favor of the priority of Kings.⁴ The conservative, e.g. Franz Delitzsch, while utilizing historical prose style as a confirmatory factor, concentrates on two reasons that arise (1) out of an analogy with other sections of Kings and Isaiah and (2) out of the authority of Chronicles, deductively applied to the chapters in question; he thus insists upon the originality of Isaiah.⁵ Bible believing scholars appear to be conditioned by five distinctive principles. They presuppose:

a) The legitimacy of multiple authorship within Biblical books, *as this is stated*. In Old Testament poetry, evangelicals therefore accept the Solomonic authorship of Proverbs (1:1, 10:1, 25:1), but also that of Agur and Lemuel in the concluding chapters of the Book (30:1, 31:1); cf. the various Psalmists that are recognized in accordance with the titles to these poems. But in the prophetic books, while the last chapter of Jeremiah is reckoned as an excerpt from II Kings 24-25, this approach is granted only upon the basis of the truly exceptional statement with which the preceding, 51st, chapter closes, namely, "Thus far are the words of Jeremiah" (51:64). Failing to find such qualification in Isaiah, a conservative will question liberalism's enthusiastic assertion of the fully parallel character of Isaiah 36-39, as taken from II Kings 18-20,⁶ especially should this claim run counter to points b) and e) below.

¹ James A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Kings* (Henry S. Gehman, ed.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), p. 513; cf. the accompanying bibliography.

² Thus one of the chapters in Edward J. Young's recent apologetic study, *Who Wrote Isaiah?*, is devoted to the place of Isa. 36-39 in the prophecy (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1958), pp. 35-40.

³ *Biblical Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1892), II:6.

⁴ *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1909), p. 227.

⁵ *Op. cit.*, II:4-5.

⁶ George Buchanan Gray, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Isaiah*, I-XXXIX (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912), p. xlvii.

b) The reliability of the Book of Chronicles. This faith in the Chronicler concerns first his assertion that Isaiah the prophet did compose historical records, even though some of these are now confessedly lost (II Chr. 26:32). Then, since the use by a prophet of the third person need not thereby forbid his own composition (cf. Isa. 7:3 with 6:1, 8:1, 6, or 20:2-3), Isaiah could have himself written Isaiah 36-39. Second, the Chronicler states, "The acts of Hezekiah, and his good deeds, are written in the vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel" (II Chr. 32:32). We recognize that textual uncertainty exists, to the extent that the ancient versions read, "in the vision of Isaiah and in the book of the kings."⁷ But Chronicles has previously described a prophetic history "inserted in the book of the kings of Israel" (II Chr. 20:34 ASV, RSV), and it here lists Isaiah before Kings, tending to confirm modern scholarship's normal preference for a Masoretic reading.⁸ This in turn favors a view of the incorporation

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within either our present Book of Kings, or its annalistic source; of material originally composed by Isaiah for his own book.⁹

c) The inconclusiveness of literary comparisons. Most liberal writers assert that Isaiah 36-39 was "taken bodily from II Kings."¹⁰ Perhaps the most influencing evidence is the apparent abridgment of certain verses in Isaiah 36-39 as compared with their counterparts in II Kings (cf. 36:2 with II K 18:17; 36:17 with 18:32, 37:36 with 19:35; and 38:4-8 with 20:4-11). Delitzsch, moreover, seems unduly to minimize this data in his recourse to a theory of textual corruption in Isaiah.¹¹ More adequate might be a view of corresponding amplification of Isaiah's materials by the author of Kings. In any event, Delitzsch's basic contention that II Kings 18:13-20:19 "lacks the Deuteronomic stamp, which betrays the author's hand when he takes the initiative on his own account"¹² cannot be gainsaid. The only really tenable evidence in S.R. Driver's list of literary influences from Kings are the two introductory phrases, "In those days" (Isa. 38:1), and, "At that time" (39:1),¹³ which are hardly conclusive. Driver himself admits that "The prophecy 37:22-32, bears indeed unmistakable marks of Isaiah's hand,"¹⁴ and most modern liberal scholars treat these chapters in Kings as a unique phenomenon, drawn from a "prophetic biography... oracles quoted in the historical context to

⁷ In either event, Pfeiffer concludes over Isa. chapters 36-39 that "The Chronicler read them both in Kings and in the book of Isaiah," *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Rev. ed.; New York; Harper and Bros., 1948), p. 448, thus witnessing to an early appearance of this material as we now have it.

⁸ Cf. Sir Frederic Kenyon's *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts* as revised by A. W. Adams (New York Harper and Bros., 1958), p. 154.

⁹ On the originally independent character of the Chronicler's prophetic sources, see C. F. Keil, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament, the Books of the Chronicles* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1950), pp. 34-37.

¹⁰ Pfeiffer *op. cit.*, p. 421; cf. R.B.Y. Scott, "Accepted by almost all writers," "The Book of Isaiah," George A. Buttrick, ed., *The Interpreter's Bible* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1951), V:155.

¹¹ *Op. cit.*, II:3.

¹² *Ibid.*, II A; cf. Young, *op cit.*, p. 35.

¹³ *Op. cit.*, p. 227.

¹⁴ *Loc. cit.*; cf. Delitzsch's description of the "noble, delicate, pictorial prose" of the writer as "worthy of Isaiah," *op. cit.*, II:5. Driver indeed contends that "the surrounding narrative... seems to be the work of a writer of the subsequent generation." He adduces, however, simply 36:19 as not true of Sennacherib (Could he not have so boasted?) and 37:38 as assuming his assassination immediately upon his return to Assyria (which is not stated).

which they belonged."¹⁵ In the light of Isaiah's having lived 150 years prior to the last event mentioned in Kings, the most probable source for the II Kings data would appear to be, either Isaiah 36-39 directly, or at least some Isaianic history which the prophet may later have somewhat abridged for his final Book.¹⁶ Most of the other "Kings-like" data that is advanced violates the principle of:

d) The historicity of the contexts of quoted discourses. The one statement most adduced in favor of the origin of Isaiah 36-39 from Kings rather than from Isaiah is the following reference in Isaiah 37:35, II Kings 19:27, "I will defend this city... for My servant David's sake" (cf. Isa. 38:5 and II K 20:5), upon which liberalism pounces as "a theme prominent in Kings (cf. I Kings 11:11, 34; II Kings 8:19)."¹⁷ But Scripture is explicit in attributing these words to Yahweh, speaking through Isaiah, to Hezekiah! Of similar character are such speeches as Hezekiah's words to Yahweh, "I have walked before Thee in truth" (Isa. 38:3, II K 20:3), which are listed by Driver as clue to the compiler of Kings,¹⁸ but which are actually tracable to David (I K 2:4) and are claimed to be an authentic Hezekian utterance. This leads directly to what is one of the most basic assumptions of Biblical orthodoxy, namely:

e) The inspiration of the Biblical compiler. That Scripture utilizes varied sources; pagan as well as prophetic, hardly requires documentation. The evangelical assumes nothing about the general character and value or specific inspiration of these sources, insisting only on the validity of their final Biblical usage, which then becomes equivalent in authority to the very words of God.¹⁹ Appreciation in this area would have saved E. R. Thiele, for example, from the confusion exhibited in his claim of inerrant sources for the chronology of Hezekiah, later errantly synthesized by the Biblical editor.²⁰ Now then, the inspired compiler of Isaiah has prefixed to this volume the title, "The vision of Isaiah... which he saw... in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah" (1:1). Certain critical apologists who first attempted to justify to the church theories of Isaianic disunity sought to escape the force of these words by claiming that they "cannot apply to any but the early chapters."²¹ Subsequent scholars, however, have been more candid in admitting that the work which resulted from the addition of chapters 36-39 to what Isaiah had so far produced "was probably from the first understood to consist entirely of prophecies by Isaiah and narratives relating to him."²² What other impress-

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sion would be conveyed by the Book itself, in its entirety, as inspiredly compiled? Young, therefore, legitimately designates his recent discussion of Isaiah's authenticity as a study in "whether the assertion of the heading is correct."²³ The evangelical's presupposition of Biblical authority, firmly anchored in the precedent of Christ and the apostles (e.g., John 10:35, Acts 24:14), cannot admit, either that the compiler erred through ignorance, or

¹⁵ Scott, *op. cit.*, V:155.

¹⁶ Per C. F. Keil, *Manual of Historico-Critical Introduction to the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1884), 1:319; cf. the omission from Isa. 36 of II K 18:14-16, even as II K 20 omits Isa. 38:9-20.

¹⁷ Scott, *op. cit.*, V:370, "...probably an addition to the oracle by the editor of Kings."

¹⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 227.

¹⁹ Thus Jude 14-15, for example, assigns no validity to the Book of Enoch (which it does not mention) other than in respect to the historicity of its one verse which Jude himself quotes.

²⁰ *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (Univ. of Chicago Press, 1951), pp. 138, 268, and as elaborated in private conversation.

²¹ George Adam Smith, *The Book of Isaiah* (The Expositor's Bible; New York: Hodder & Stoughton, n.d.), II:4.

²² Gray, *op. cit.*, p. xlix.

²³ *Op. cit.*, p. 7.

deceived through intent. He therefore approaches Isaiah 36-39 convinced that these chapters (as well as 40-66, cf. John 12:38-41) constitute an authentic element of the vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz.

2. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHAPTERS 36-39 WITH THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

When the recorded dialog between Hezekiah and Isaiah is recognized as the authentic work of this same prophet, one's understanding of the whole Book of Isaiah is given fresh light.

a) Isaiah's reorientation. The Prophecy of Isaiah manifests a clear shift in attitude in its latter chapters; but the question is, where does this begin? Traditional liberal thought pinpoints this break at chapter 40. Pfeiffer, for example, asserts that "the differences in style, historical background, and theological thought between Is. 1-39 and 40-66 are so marked that it is preferable to treat them as separate books."²⁴ Yet C. C. Torrey would favor chapter 34, with its apocalyptic message of comfort, and states flatly that, "No collection beginning with chapter 40 ever had separate existence except in modern critical theories."²⁵ His explanation, then, for the insertion of 36-39 is that 34-on "stood in need of authentication and of a locking device by which it might be securely attached to the book [Isa. 1-33] which had been built up."²⁶ It cannot be denied, moreover, that 36-39 (except for the threat in 39:6-7) does exhibit a changed prophetic attitude, shifting from Judah's condemnation to its acceptance by God, with comfort for the ravished people and encouragement for Hezekiah the king, thereby "locking" closely with the message of chapters 40 ff. Compare the plight of the cities of Judah in 36:1 with 40:9, 44:26; God's concern for the walls of Jerusalem in 37:33, 35 with 49:16, 62:6 (walls still standing); and the promise of the deliverance of Zion in 36:15, 37:22 with 40:9, 41:27. G. W. Wade thus quotes Ecclesiasticus 49:18-24 on the destruction of Sennacherib and how Isaiah "comforted them that mourned in Zion and showed... hidden things or ever they came," and concludes, "This statement obviously has in view cc. xxxvi-lxvi, which must therefore have been united."²⁷

Such reorientation has therefore caused consistent liberalism to reject Isaiah 36-39 *in toto*. As Pfeiffer surmises,

Although such a sacrifice of religious and ethical principles on the altar of patriotism under the influence of war hysteria is easily conceivable nothing in the authentic oracles of Isaiah indicates that it ever took place.²⁸

Evangelicals, however, can tolerate no such skepticism; and they are joined by many liberals. These range from R.B.Y. Scott—who rejects most of Isaiah 37 (with its miracles) as a legendary doublet, but who yet admits chapter 36 as an authentic, contemporary account of an Isaiah-turned-nationalistic, yet disappointed by Hezekiah's permanent surrender to Sennacherib²⁹—to John Skinner, who recognizes Judah's historic deliverance and the reality of Isaiah's message, about which he says,

²⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 416.

²⁵ *The Second Isaiah* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), p. 100; cf. Pfeiffer's subsequent and somewhat inconsistent willingness to connect chapters 34-35 with the style of the so-called Second Isaiah, and as an introduction to it, *op. cit.*, pp. 439, 441, 448.

²⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 103.

²⁷ *The Book of the Prophet Isaiah* (Westminster Commentaries; London: Methuen, 1911), p.i.

²⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 435.

²⁹ *Op. cit.*, V:156-157.

It is not so difficult as it might appear to account for this alternation in Isaiah's demeanour.... The king recognized the hopeless plight in which his crooked policy had landed him and, thoroughly humbled, threw himself

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on the protection of Jehovah and the guidance of the prophet. On the other hand the arrogance and perfidy of Sennacherib and his blasphemous defiance of the God of Israel had put him in the wrong... Isaiah felt therefore that the time of Judah's chastisement was past.³⁰

What Skinner fails to note is that such a line of reasoning can authenticate Isaiah 40 ff. just as well as 36-39.

b) Isaiah's literary purpose. The chapters of the Hezekiah dialogue serve, not simply to leave open a passive possibility for the unity of the Book of Isaiah, but also to demonstrate an active design on Isaiah's part for composing chapters 40-66. At the outset, his reference to the death of Sennacherib (681 B.C.) in 37:38 extends Isaiah's known life span a full 20 years beyond 741 B.C. The prophet would therefore have had ample opportunity to plan out the inscripturation of his post-701 messages at the time of his composition of 36-39. The conclusion of 39 is particularly relevant, since the Babylonian exile predicted in verses 6-7 not only corresponds to Isaiah's subsequent statements (e.g., 43:14, 45:13, 48:20) but seems to constitute a deliberate anticipation of them, "the key to the promise of the deliverance from that captivity; dwelt on in the... succeeding chapters."³¹ Isaiah's prediction of Babylon in chapter 39, in other words, forms part and parcel of his prediction of Cyrus the Persian in chapter 44. The only alternative open for antipredictive critics is to posit, as some do, that by "Babylon" Isaiah 39 really means "Assyria" (!).³²

Evangelicals, however, should not treat Isaiah 39 as if it terminated with the Babylonian prediction. Allis, for example, is thus compelled to explain chapter 40 as in Isaianic counteractive to the gloom of the statement that precedes it.³³ But this is to do an injustice both to 39 and to 40. Chapter 39 actually concludes with Hezekiah's "expression of relief that the punishment will not come in his lifetime."³⁴ Indeed, this "evidence of God's mercy"³⁵ 15 has led certain liberal writers to assume the hand of a later editor in verse 8b because of its contrast with the resignation to calamity found in 8a.³⁶ If, however, Hezekiah genuinely anticipated "peace and truth [to be fulfilled] in his days" (39:8b), then Isaiah's purpose in including the king's words at this particular point in his prophetic book becomes clear: for God next proclaimed, "Comfort ye, comfort ye My people... and cry unto Jerusalem that her warfare is accomplished.... that she hath received of Jehovah's hand double for all her sins" (40:1-2). Chapter 40 thereby constitutes an authentic prophecy of Isaiah, datable to 701 B.C.,

³⁰ *The Book of the Prophet Isaiah* (Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges; Cambridge Univ. Press, 1910, I: xli.

³¹ R. Sinker, in Letitia D. Jeffries, *The Unity of the Book of Isaiah* (Cambridge: Deighton Bell & Co., 1889) p. vii.

³² Skinner, *op. cit.*, 1:303; cf. Scott, "in substance historical, but colored by the experience of the later generation when it was written down," *op. cit.*, V:379.

³³ *The Unity of Isaiah* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1950), pp. 48-49.

³⁴ Scott, *op. cit.*, V:381.

³⁵ I. W. Slotki, *Isaiah* (London: Soncino Press, 1949), p. 184.

³⁶ Scott, *op. cit.*, V:381.

and directed to that chastened remnant of Judah which survived Sennacherib's devastations and deportations, seemingly more massive even than those of Nebuchadnezzar, exaggerated as the Assyrian's claims of over 200,000 captives may be. The importance of this relationship must not be underestimated. Young has stated that "the most formidable argument which must be faced by the defenders of the unity of the book is the one which maintains that the background of chapters 40-66, is Babylonian and not that of the 8th century B.C."³⁷ Those who would detract from Isaiah's unity, from George Adam Smith³⁸ down to Clyde Francisco, have so reiterated this assertion—"Both sides agree that the prophetic voice in chapters 40-66 speaks from the point of view of the exile"³⁹—that even some evangelicals have been tempted to concede the point. Yet even superficial induction will verify Alexander's observation of "how seldom 40-66 mentions Babylon, the exile, or the restoration."⁴⁰ Such statements constitute the equivalent to but 3 out of Isaiah's last 27 chapters.⁴¹ Much of 40-66, moreover, simply cannot refer to Babylon;⁴² 52:3-6 seems to make direct reference to deliver-

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ance from Assyrian captivity;⁴³ and, as just noted, Isaiah's own introduction, 39:9, integrates fully with 8th Century conditions.

That this function of chapter 39 was deliberately intended by Isaiah is validated by the arrangement of 36-39. Whatever be one's understanding, of "the 14th year of Hezekiah" in 36:1 and the dating of Sennacherib's attacks,⁴⁴ chapters 38 and 39 must still antedate 36-37 (cf. 38:6).⁴⁵ Merodach-baladan's embassy (39:1) seemingly contributed to the subsequent Assyrian invasion, either of 711 or of 701 B.C.⁴⁶ Most scholars agree that this chronological inversion is to be attributed, not to II Kings, but to its prophetic source.⁴⁷ As Young, therefore, has well argued,

Chapters 36 and 37... look back to the series of Assyrian prophecies to which they are the completion and climax. On the other hand, chapters 38 and 39 form the preparation and

³⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 26.

³⁸ *Op. cit.*, II:7.

³⁹ *Introducing the Old Testament* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1951), p. 118.

⁴⁰ *Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1953), I:57.

⁴¹ Probable references to Cyrus: 41:2-3, 25; 44:26b-45:6; 45:13; 46:11; 48:14-15. To the fall of Babylon: 43:14; 46:1-2; 47; 48:20. To the return: 43:5-7, 19-21; 48:20; 52:2-3, 7-12.

⁴² Young, *op. cit.*, ch. 9.

⁴³ Though cf. Alexander's caution, *op. cit.*, 11:275-276.

⁴⁴ Scott seems correct in insisting that "the 'fourteenth year of Hezekiah' (36:1) was certainly much earlier than 701," *op. cit.*, V:156. It may indeed be the proper date for 38-39, *ibid.*, V:362, 372. In any event, the proposal of Kitchen and Mitchell of at least a coregency for Hezekiah before 722 appears preferable to Thiele's rejection of the synchronisms of II K 17:1; 18:1, 9, 10; J. D. Douglas, ed., *The New Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962), p. 217.

⁴⁵ Scott, even while denying this verse as an editorial gloss, yet recognizes the chronological priority of 38-39, *op. cit.*, V:372.

⁴⁶ 711 corresponds better historically, *ibid.*, V:305, and in respect to Manasseh's accession, 15 yrs. later, in 696 B.C. It should be noted, moreover, that Albright's demand for dating Hezekiah's second contact with Sennacherib a decade beyond this point, *BASOR* 130 (1933), 1-11; 141 (1956), 23-27, is not accepted by some other orientalist, as Cyrus H. Gordon, who still dates Hezekiah, 726-697, *The World of the Old Testament* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1958), pp. 223, 228.

⁴⁷ Montgomery, *op. cit.*, p. 516. E. J. Kissane, however, does seek to explain the inversion as from Kings, the Sennacherib invasion listed in sequence with that of Shalmaneser, II K 18:9, *The Book of Isaiah* (Dublin Browne & Nolan, 1941), 1:395.

presupposition of what follows in chapter 40... This particular arrangement would seem to argue for the Isaianic origin of these chapters themselves, and also of chapters 40 ff.⁴⁸

3. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ISAIAH 36-39 AND ISAIAH 40-48

Marked affinities exist between the dialog with Hezekiah and the remainder of Isaiah's prophecy, notably his immediately following "Book of Consolation," chapters 40-48. The examples herein cited, drawn primarily from chapters 37 and 38, are not of course exhaustive but are, one may trust, representative and relevant.

a) Literary correspondence. While inconclusive in itself (see above, 1-c), the following distinctive words and phrases serve to link these two portions of Isaiah. Reference to structures: as m'silla, "highway," in 36:2 (RSV) and 40:3, 49:11; or chariots, 37:24 and 43:17—to nature: as Lebanon, cedars, and fir trees, 37:24 and 40:16, 41:19, 44:14 respectively; plant growth, 37:40 and 40:24, 44:14; or even Babylon's "farness," 39:3 and 43:6—and to theological terms: as God's "zeal," 37:32 and 42:13 (cf. 9:7, 13); peace, 38:17, 39-8, and 45:7, 48:18, truth, 38:18, 19, 39:8, and 42:3, 43:9; praise, 38:18 and 42:8, 10, 12; or song 38:20 and 48:20. More significant are Isaiah's longer phrases, such as, children come to the birth but not brought forth, 37:3 and 66:9; "Be not afraid," 37:6 and 40:9, 44:9; "the Holy One of Israel," 37:23 and 41:14, 16, 20, etc.; the drying up of the rivers, 37:25 and 42:15, 44:27; "Hast thou not heard?" 37:26 and 40:21, 28; "As the grass of the field," 37:27 and 40:6, 4,4:4; "for Mine own sake," 37:35 and 43:25, 48:11; or, be'emeth, "in truth," 38:3 and 48:1.

b) Ceremonial stress. Hezekiah's religious reforms, made capital of by the Rabshakeh, 36:7, seem to have stimulated a recurrent theme of ritual in Isaiah's later ministry, cf. 43:23-24, the complaint because Judah, as Alexander says, had "not performed their ceremonial duties."⁴⁹ Noteworthy are such stresses in common, as upon God's central altar, 36:7 and 56:7, 60:7; upon the Jerusalem temple 37:1, 38:20-22 and 44:28, 56:5; and upon prayer therein, 37:4, 15-21, 38:3 and 56:7.

c) Parallel concepts. Most significant of all is the close correspondence that exists between the doctrinal emphases of Isaiah 36-39 and 40-48. The "remnant" concept, so characteristic of Isaiah's earlier prophecies, reappears in 37:4, 31, 32 and also in 46:3. The Angel of Yahweh is prominent in 37:36 and 63:9; God's efficacious word, 37:22 and 40:8, 45:23; and His predictive decree, "done long ago, and formed of ancient times," 37:26 and 41:4, 22, 26, 42:9, etc. Compare the stress upon God's "laying waste fortified cities" through His chosen agent, in 37:26 and 45:2 (cf. 10:5), and upon the forgiveness of sins, which marks 38:17 and 40:2, 43:25, 44:22. So strong are the parallels found in 37:16-20 that many have here remarked how "the language of Hezekiah's prayer resembles that of Second Isaiah."⁵⁰

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But this concerns more than mere language. His prayer enunciates: explicit monotheism, "Thou are God, even thou alone," cf. 43:10-11, 44:6-e, 45:5-6, etc.; God's historical sovereignty over "all the kingdoms of the earth," cf. 40:22-23; creation, "Thou hast made

⁴⁸ *Op. cit.*, 37-38.

⁴⁹ *Op. cit.*, II:158.

⁵⁰ Scott, *op. cit.*, V:366.

heaven and earth," cf. 40:28, 42:5; the folly of idols, "the work of men's hands, wood and stone," cf. 40:19-20, 21:24, 29, etc.; and universal eschatology, "that all may know that Thou are Jehovah, even Thou alone," cf. 45:6, 49:29. Critics such as Marti can only opine, "Hiskia spricht... als ob er, wie der Erzähler, Dtn and Dtjes gelesen hätte."⁵¹ Evangelicals, however, can be reasonably certain that by 701 B.C. Hezekiah (and not just his narrator, if the Bible means what it says) had become fairly well acquainted with Deuteronomy and, although he had not yet read Deutero-Isaiah, had maintained a continuing dialog with the man who was about to become its author.

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⁵¹ *Das Buch Jesaja erklärt* (Tubingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1900), p. 254.